



**National
Transportation
Safety Board**

The Accident – Now What?

**Managing the Aftermath through
Effective Crisis Communications**

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Lac-Mégantic, Quebec

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NTSB

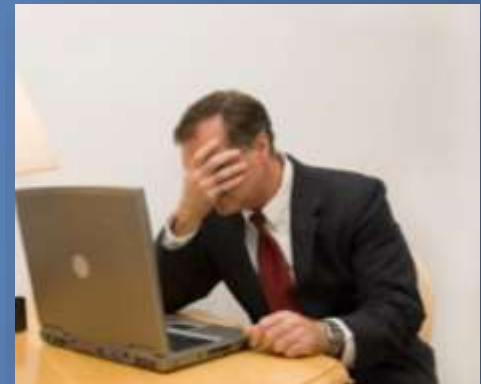
Could this be you?



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Could this be you?

- Reputations suffer
- Credibility destroyed
- Confidence shattered



Could this be you?

Your organization may survive after a poorly handled crisis, but your career may not.

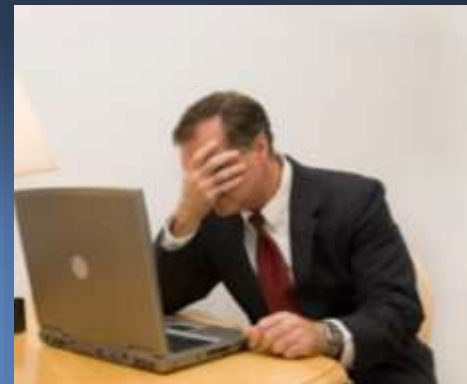


Could this be you?

Your organization may survive after a poorly handled disaster, but your career may not.



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Could this be
YOU?



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**The way a crisis is publically handled can
either make or break you.**





YOU

First, A word about working with NTSB

- If you are a party to an NTSB investigation, all information related to the actual investigation must come from the NTSB.



This is not a gag order



- We want one voice of the investigation.
 - The NTSB is that voice.
- Parties may discuss things not directly related to the actual investigation.

RULE OF THUMB

If you can say it the day *before* the accident, you can probably say it *after* the accident.



The French-owned Airbus said in a statement that the crashed airliner was built in 1997 and had accumulated more than 56,000 hours of flight time. Metrojet acquired the plane in 2012, Airbus said.

Washington Post
November 1, 2015



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A GOOD PRACTICE

To be safe, clear press releases with NTSB Investigator-in-Charge or Public Affairs Office before releasing information.



Advance Preparation



Advance Preparation

In order to effectively manage after a crisis, you must prepare before the crisis.



Advance Preparation

- Plan – have one
- Practice the plan
 - Drills, table-top exercises
- Anticipate
 - Prepare media templates in advance
 - Website and other marketing considerations



Good Execution



Robert's Crisis Communications Tips

- Prepare yourself
- Display command presence
- Show compassion
- Demonstrate transparency
- Stay in your lane
- Remember your message



Crisis Communications Tip

PREPARE YOURSELF



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Prepare yourself

- Know the facts
- Identify your talking points
- “Murder board”





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Prepare yourself



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Crisis Communications Tip

DISPLAY COMMAND PRESENCE



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Command Presence

- Be in control; control the environment
- Don't be overrun by the media



Command Presence

- Be in control; control the environment
- Don't be overrun by the media



Command Presence

Please raise your hand.
When I call on you, state your
name, your media affiliation,
and ask your question.
Thank you.



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Command Presence

- Articulate clearly
- Use good eye contact
- Speak with authority



P.S. – Don't be defensive!



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Crisis Communications Tip

SHOW COMPASSION



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At approximately 9 this morning, a
flight operated by ...

Before I go any further, on behalf of
the NTSB, I would like to extend our
condolences to the families and friends
of the victims of this tragic accident.

- Don't *read* this – speak from the heart!
- Show that you care!
- Show compassion!



Crisis Communications Tip

DEMONSTRATE TRANSPARENCY



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NBC News Investigation of Crumb Rubber



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The way you answer *does matter*

What was the speed of the airplane as it departed the runway?

“I can’t answer that.”

If you are the investigator

“One of the many things the investigation will do is develop a complete timeline of events, including speeds throughout the accident sequence.”

If you are the operator

“The NTSB is conducting the investigation, so that question would best be directed to them.”



Crisis Communications Tip

STAY IN YOUR LANE



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“Stay in your lane”



Don't talk about
things that are
outside of your
area.



Stay in your lane



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Crisis Communications Tip

REMEMBER YOUR MESSAGE



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The Pivot – your best friend.

- When asked a question that you are not prepared to answer, pivot to your message.





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Good Luck!



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